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ABSTRACT

This trainer's guide is intended to assist supervisors of work-based career training projects in teaching students to use a microcomputer to develop and manage a visitors book (a record of who visits a business). The guide is one in a series of core curriculum modules that is intended for use in combination on- and off-the-job programs to familiarize youth with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in the workplace. Included in the guide are the following components: project information, a summary of the content and approach of the guide, supervisor's notes, off-the-job tutor's notes, background information, lists of tasks and core skills, an action plan that includes suggested learning activities, supervisor and trainee review sheets, and an assessment form. (MN)

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Youth Training Scheme

# CORE EXEMPLAR WORK BASED PROJECT

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## Visitors book

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ESF

CORE SKILLS PROJECT

YTS

OTF No: 1

PROJECT No: Y|12

TYPE Individual | Group 2

**The Further Education Staff College**
Coombe Lodge, Blagdon, Bristol, BS18 6RG ✆ 0761-62503

ISBN 0-948361-11-5

## ASSESSMENT OF CORE SKILLS

This series of projects contains a number of different formats for recording assessment of core skills. These formats are offered for experimental purposes; none is proven as the 'best' method. All are based on the principle that feedback to trainees is a necessary part of the learning process and that such feedback should include information on core skill development.

Further work is being carried out on the methods of assessing achievement of core skills in work-based learning and of how to log such achievement on a record which trainees can take away from YTS. Some of the results of this work will be included in later MSC/ESF Core Skills Project publications.

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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT ARE WORK-BASED PROJECTS?

Work-based projects are learning materials which aim to make the most of all the possibilities for developing trainees' skills, knowledge and attitudes in the workplace. They build upon everyday workplace tasks to provide experience of the whole range of YTS learning opportunities.

The projects in this series have been tested with managing agents as part of the YTS Core Project, which is jointly financed by MSC and the European Social Fund. In some cases managing agents will be able to use the projects as they are. In others they will need to be adapted to the circumstances of a particular workplace or to the aims of a particular scheme. Some managing agents will prefer to produce their own projects. For such cases these examples aim to demonstrate some principles of good design in work-based learning materials. These principles are:

To encourage trainees to learn by doing
To make the most of all the experiences which are available to trainees in the workplaces.
To start from a real task which is seen as relevant by all parties involved — trainees, workplace supervisors, trainers and off-the-job tutors.
To help trainees see the relationships between things learnt on- and off-the-job.
To base the assessment of achievement upon trainees' actual performance in tasks.
To look for all the opportunities for learning which arise from a task and, in particular, to help trainees to develop the core skills. These skills, in number, communication, problem-solving and practical activities, are used in a wide variety of tasks and are essential if trainees are to achieve competence in those tasks*. They are the skills — of finding out information, planning how to do things, overcoming difficulties and so on — which help trainees to learn more quickly in new situations, either in the same workplace, in a different one, or in the world outside work.

Such skills are required naturally by the workplace tasks in these projects and, in requiring trainees to go beyond the task itself, the projects deliberately *add* to the range of core skills which are required in an everyday working situation. This is especially important for some of the skills of communication and problem-solving which trainees are often not given the opportunity to exercise in work experience.

These principles can be incorporated in projects for all placements and for trainees of all ability levels. Although the projects in this series follow a common format, there is no single 'best' style. Nor is any special expertise in writing necessary. Good work-based projects can be produced by anyone who is determined to help trainees to exploit all of the potential for learning in work experience.

*A technical manual 'Core Skills in YTS' is currently available from MSC. It is supported by a short introductory leaflet and a practitioner's guide for supervisors. A separate manual is available on computer literacy/information technology.

# PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was used in a recently-formed ITeC in which trainees had completed Stages I and II of the 52 weeks training programme. Stage I was 4 weeks during which the trainees did one week in each of three main theme areas of Electronics, Computing and Office Technology. Stage II was a 4/5 months training period where trainees selected modules in two of the main theme areas. They were then moving into the 6 months project-based Stage III. They had covered common units including keyboard skills, general business knowledge and audio/visual techniques.

# SUMMARY

The trainees are required to:

- examine existing information and identify what further information is required.
- design a new form to accommodate this information.
- place this information onto a word processor floppy disc.
- identify and discuss problems arising from this exercise.

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# SUPERVISOR'S NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

This work-based project is designed to focus the trainee upon the core skill areas of: number, communication, practical skills and problem-solving. Wherever possible, it is also designed to provide learning opportunities to improve personal effectiveness, to provide wider knowledge of the world of work and elsewhere and to furnish the trainee with skills which can be transferred to other situations.

The essence of the work-based project is that people learn more quickly and effectively by actually doing something.

The following notes are designed to help you, your staff, and the trainee, so that the project can be carried out with a minimum of disruption to normal work activity:

1. Where appropriate, please advise other staff that the trainee will be doing the project.

2. Please ensure that the trainee has read the project details and understands what is required.

3. Please ensure that the trainee is aware of any aspects of safety, hygiene or security which might touch upon the project.

4. Please ensure that the trainee appreciates that good planning will make the task easier. Wherever possible, and before the project starts, the trainee should be encouraged to take responsibility for his/her learning by estimating time, deciding on equipment and materials, identifying possible hazards and other problems, and generally "thinking the project through".

5. When the project is complete discuss with the trainee the activities he/she has been engaged in. What problems were there? What has he/she learnt? Would he/she tackle the project differently a second time?

6. Encourage the trainee to complete the Trainee's Review page.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. Ask the trainees to make appointments to see and interview any of the management/staff from whom they need information.

2. Check their progress from time to time and set them new targets if required. They will probably require some help in selecting the most appropriate type of graphs to display the data collected. It might be sufficient to show them typical graphs of the type they could employ. You might be able to arrange for the off-the-job tutor to cover graphical representation before they begin their project.

3. Discuss their project report with the trainees and explore their feelings about the project and their interactions with others in the Centre. Ask them to assess how well they think they have performed and how their performance might have been improved. Try to get them to assess in which areas they have strengths and weaknesses so that a development plan can be established to build on the strengths and lessen, or overcome, the weakness.

# Names

TRAINEE.....

SUPERVISOR.....

TUTOR.....

# Times

Please fill in the table below. This will show the time you spend on completing this project. The first column has been filled in as an example. Make another table if you need more space.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DATE | 21/1/83 | | | | |
| START | 9·30 | | | | |
| FINISH | 12·30 | | | | |
| TIME SPENT | 3 hours | | | | |

# BACKGROUND

The ITeC has many visitors from various organisations and from individual members of the general public, including prospective trainees and their parents.

ITeCs often keep a standard visitors book but it might not include all the information required. The entries in the book need to be analysed, and a more precise record form devised for future entries.

This project requires trainees to design that form and to enter the records on a disc on the word processor.

# SITUATION

In any organisation where a visitor's book is kept and where trainees can record information on word processors.

# PURPOSES

Doing this project will enable you to learn about keeping records by using a word processor. It will also help you to develop your CORE SKILLS in number, communication, problem-solving, and practical activities. Developing these skills will make it easier for you to adapt to changes in your job, and to retrain when the need arises.

The tasks you are asked to do are outlined below, together with the most important core skills that they contain. When you have finished each task, ask your supervisor to tell you how well he/she thought you did in the task, and record this on the Assessment Form near the back of this project. This record will be needed to complete your certificate at the end of your YTS year.

| Task | Core skills | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Extract information from the visitor's book. | Find out information from written sources. | 6.2 |
| Find out what further information is required. | Find out information by speaking to people. | 6.1 |
| 3. Draw up a new "visitors form". | Plan how to present information. | 9.6 |
| 4. Word process the form design on a floppy disc. | Operate and control equipment.<br>Check products/process for quality/accuracy. | 13.4<br>14.2 |
| 5. Categorise information from the visitor's book | Decide which category something belongs to. | 10.2 |
| 6. Draw graphs/diagrams to present information. | Provide information in writing and by means of tables and diagrams. | 7.3 |
| 7. Write and type up the project report. Identify problems and explain how these were dealt with. | Plan how to present information.<br>Provide information in writing. | 9.6<br>7.3 |
| 8. Discuss your report with your supervisor. | Discuss with other people in the workplace how things are to be done. | 8.6 |

# ACTION PLAN

You will need to discuss the project with a member or members of the management team to find what information will be stored. Typically this information will be:

Name of visitor;
Name of the organisation he/she represents;
Reason for visit;
Who he/she is visiting;
Date of visit;
Times of arrival and departure;
Car registration number.

Visits to the ITec are very time-consuming, so management wishes to analyse:

the number of visitors each member of staff has;
the frequency and duration of visits;
and, hence, the total time each week for each member of staff;
the reasons for the visit, e.g., to look around the Centre, to negotiate a contract, maintenance of equipment, etc.

This information should assist members of staff when planning their time and could lead to a reappraisal of policy about accepting visitors. Some companies will only allow firms' sales representatives to visit their establishment on one day per week; others have an open system.

Make notes of any questions you want to ask your supervisor before you start the project. Discuss the project with your supervisor and make sure you fully understand what you are expected to do and how you are expected to do it.

**TASK 1**
Look at the current visitor's book and make a note of the type of information it contains.

**TASK 2**
Find out, by discussions with the manager and/or the deputy manager, what additional information they would like to record.

**TASK 3**
Draw out a form which has all the necessary columns for the recording of that information.

**TASK 4**
Word process the form design on a floppy disc.

**TASK 5**
Take the information from the visitor's book, from the day it was started to the present, and write out for each month, commencing on the 1st Monday (dated):

(i) who was visited

(ii) the reason for the visit

(iii) the length of the visit

(iv) the type of visitor, i.e.,

(a) sales/technical representative
(b) local employer
(c) school teacher
(d) college
(e) careers office
(f) MSC
(g) course members (short course)

and any others.

**TASK 6**
Draw graphs/bar chart/pie chart for each category (i) to (iv) above to show, in the best possible way, the pattern of such visits.

**TASK 7**
Write and type up a project report, which sets out:

(i) The objective of the project;

(ii) What materials and equipment were used, i.e., visitors book, type of word processor, french curves/flexy curve;

(iii) The methods you used and who you interviewed;

(iv) The difficulties you met and how you overcame them;

(v) The lessons you have learned doing the project, i.e., width of columns not sufficient to take the heading or to contain the information they require or not explaining things clearly enough; the help, or hinderance, provided by other staff or trainees; the frustrations you felt.

**TASK 8**
Discuss the project report with your supervisor and complete the TRAINEE REVIEW sheet.

# TRAINEE REVIEW

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE AND DISCUSS IT WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR AND TUTOR.

1. What did you think of this project? Was it easy or hard, interesting or boring?

2. What did you learn? (Look back at the list of Purposes to see what you were supposed to learn.)

3. Did you learn anything which was not on the list of Purposes?

4. Did you need help with any particular part of the project?
   What kind of help did you get?

5. How do you think you could use what you learned in another job, or outside work?

6. Has this project helped you decide whether you need further training in certain areas?

# SUPERVISOR REVIEW

Please refer to Supervisor's Notes.

Please read the questions included under Trainee Review.

Please complete the Assessment Form and disuss your assessment with the trainee before initialling it to show that you both agree with the assessment.

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**COMMENTS:**

# ASSESSMENT
# explanatory notes

In completing this W.B.P. the trainee has the opportunity to demonstrate competence in the core skills listed on the attached form.

The first two columns list the WBP tasks and core skills which occur within them.

You are asked to assess the trainee's competence in these core skills according to the amount of support from you that the trainee needed, for example:

1. If a trainee is asked to "find information from written sources" and you provide the trainee with all the sources of that information, together with telling the trainee where to look in any particular sources, then that trainee is obviously being given much more support in finding that information than a trainee who identifies the sources and extracts correct information unaided:

2. If a trainee is asked to undertake a task which involves "noticing the needs of customers or clients", and needs considerable prompting to approach a customer, then that trainee is obviously being given more support than a trainee who takes the initiative in approaching the customer.

To be regarded as fully competent in the core skills, the trainee should need to be offered no more support than you would normally give to any experienced worker.

Most of the time job competence and core skills competence are likely to be the same, but sometimes this may not be so. For instance, a trainee involved in machining a particular component may be competent so far as planning the work is concerned (a core skill) but may not have reached experienced worker speeds (an occupational skill).

Please tick the appropriate box and initial in the space provided, after you have discussed your assessment with the trainee and agreed any further training required.

# ASSESSMENT FORM

PROJECT TITLE VISITOR'S BOOK WBP NO DATE

TRAINEE'S NAME SUPERVISOR'S NAME

| WBP TASK NO | CORE SKILLS ASSESSED | NEEDED A LOT OF ASSISTANCE | NEEDED SOME ASSISTANCE | LITTLE OR NO ASSISTANCE | | COMMENTS: INCLUDING NO OPPORTUNITY | AGREED INITIALS | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | NEEDS MORE PRACTICE | COMPETENT | | TRAINEE | SUPERVISOR |
| 1 | Find out information from written sources (6.2) | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Find out information by speaking to people (6.1) | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Plan how to present information (9.6) | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Operate and control equipment (13.4) | | | | | | | |
| | Check products/process for quality and accuracy (14.2) | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Decide which category something belongs to (10.2) | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Provide information in writing and by means of tables and diagrams (7.3) | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Plan how to present information (9.6) | | | | | | | |

# ASSESSMENT FORM continued.

| WBP TASK NO | CORE SKILLS ASSESSED | NEEDED A LOT OF ASSISTANCE | NEEDED SOME ASSISTANCE | LITTLE OR NO ASSISTANCE | | COMMENTS: INCLUDING NO OPPORTUNITY | AGREED INITIALS | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | NEEDS MORE PRACTICE | COMPETENT | | TRAINEE | SUPERVISOR |
| 8 | Discuss with others in the workplace how things are to be done. (8.6) | | | | | | | |
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